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ABSTRACT

The two papers presented in this compilation were drawn from a conference designed to encourage scholars to continue the rhetorical tradition. The first paper, presented by Dominic A. LaRusso, was the opening address of the conference and discusses the rhetorical tradition of the Renaissance. The second paper, by Phillip Marshall, was the paper most highly commended by a panel of critics at the conference and applies Chaim Perelman's concept of the universal audience to Edmund Burke's speech to the electors of Bristol in 1780. (FL)

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CONFERENCE IN RHETORICAL CRITICISM 1980

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15th Annual
Address of the Conference and Commended Papers

Sponsored by the Students & Professors of
the Department of Speech and Drama
California State University, Hayward

Raphaella Ianniello, Alice Kemp, Co-Editors
Professor Harold Barrett, Conference Director
Cover by Steele

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On May 9, 1980, professors and students from eleven colleges and universities throughout the Western States gathered for the 15th Annual Rhetorical Criticism Conference. Each year this Conference provides scholars with the unique opportunity of having their papers critiqued by a panel of highly qualified, impartial judges. The judges discuss the papers with the authors, returning written comments and suggestions for improvement. In this way, the Conference offers an invaluable experience to aspiring writers.

This journal presents the paper most highly commended by the judges, as well as the opening address of the conference. Two other papers, not included here, were also commended pending revisions.

From Aristotle to the present time, rhetoric has stimulated thought in every discipline. Through the Rhetorical Criticism Conference and this journal, we hope to encourage scholars to continue the rhetorical tradition.

Raphaella Ann Ianniello
Co-Editor

Alice M. Kemp
Co-Editor

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University of Oregon

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Phillip Marshall

University of California, Davis

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David Cramer, "Perspectives of Argument in Twentieth-Century Opera," California State University, Fullerton.

Karen D. Fritts, "The Oratorical Style of Edmund Burke: A Justification for the Dinner Bell Theory," California State University, Hayward.

Randy Lasnick, "The Rhetoric of 1968 Presidential Candidate George Corely Wallace: A Rhetorical Vision Analysis," San Francisco State.

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COMMENDED PAPERS OF THE CONFERENCE

"An Application of Perelman's University Audience to Burke's Speech to the Electors of Bristol," by Phillip Marshall.

"The Rhetorical Intimacy of Jerry Brown," by Lesley Acebo.

"Communication Values and the Iran/America Crisis," By Mina Majidian.

EDITOR – CRITICS

Professor Lewis Bright, Humboldt State University

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Professor Christine Oravec, University of Utah

Professor Karen Rasmussen, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Professor Philip Wander, San Jose State University

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS – MAY 9, 1980

1:00 Briefing—Theatre Courtyard
Greeting: Daniel S. Prentice, Chair
Department of Speech & Drama
California State University, Hayward

1:30 Presentation of Papers in Sections
Presentation
Comments of Critics
Decision for Commendation

4:00 Reading of Commended Papers to Entire Conference—Robinson Hall 137

5:30 Cocktail Hour at Campus Ministry Center

7:00 Dinner at Campus Ministry Center

Master of Ceremonies:

Harold Barrett

Introducing the Speaker:

Janus J. Murphy, Department of Rhetoric
University of California, Davis

Speaker:

Dominic A. LaRusso
University of Oregon

"Retorica: Lady of the Renaissance"

RETORICA: LADY OF THE RENAISSANCE

Dominic A. LaRusso
University of Oregon

I

To those of you here, tonight, who so graciously relinquished your time to play ear-witness to my working thoughts, I should like to dedicate a poem written in the spirit of the Renaissance:

Grazie, O Dio
Per il regalo della Donna
O, che Donna
Questa Donna . . .
Che ha, in se,
L'Anima e L'Essenza
Del Essere, del Umanità.
Questa Donna . . .
Da Ieri
Di Oggi
Per Domani
Questa Donna . . .
O, Che Donna
Questa Donna che si chiama RETORICA

Thank you, O Lord
For the gift of the Lady
Oh, what a Lady
This Lady . . .
Who has, in her,
The Soul and the Essence
Of Being, of Humanity.
This Lady . . .
From Yesterday
Of Today
For Tomorrow
This Lady . . .
Oh, what a Lady
This Lady called RHETORIC

Despite the conclusion encouraged by the pausity of information in contemporary histories of Rhetoric, Italy of the *Rinascimento* has had a continuous and healthy tradition surrounding this Lady and the art she represents.[2] The forum of Rome, the pulpits of Florence, the classrooms of peninsular schools and the courts of Renaissance princes and Popes all shared a saga marked by theoretic exploration, insightful analysis and courageous practical activity. It is a tradition whose peak was reached during the rebirth which was cradled between the Matterhorn and Etna and which is said to have begun its early labor pains around 1300 and culminated with the hypertrophy of Baroque at the beginning of the 1600's. It is a tradition spurred by the linguistic prejudice of the *studia humanitatis* and carried——in part——by selected translations of many ancient sources, critical appraisals of both ancient and contemporary efforts and original treatises which ranged from didactic statements through dialogic inquiries to tabular citation.[3] Moreover, the rhetorical tradition of this milieu was nurtured as much by the reflections of poets, ambassadors, Popes, tyrants, and men of the cloth as by professional scholars and teachers whose prime interest was in the rhetorical experience.

At this point, one could hardly avoid calling attention to the relevant thoughts of the immortal Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), *exemplum* of those who supported the cause for its own sake rather than for possible personal gain. In *De Vulgari Eloquentia, De Monarchia* and the *Divina Commedia,* this early luminary of Renaissance culture demonstrates the use of rhetorical principles not only in the numerous arguments and discussions utilized within the works, but in the overall nature of each effort.[4] Lest one think those achievements to be mere accident, in the *Convivio,* Dante presents his version of the nature and scope of the art of Rhetoric.[5] Many of those who came after, including the famous and the infamous, voiced their support of the rhetorical adventure as an important contribution to the humanization of the young and the stability of society. Residents of the peninsula sensitive enough to note the divergent currents in matters political were also aware of the different intellectual channels pursued by the active

theorists of the day. Often within sight of each other and, at times, within a matter of a day's journey, the interested citizen could attend to arguments of Aristotelians, Platonists, Ciceronians and Eclecticists directed toward *the* ultimate rhetorical design. If overwhelmed by the positions of Bartolomeo Ricci (1489-1569) or Daniello Barbaro (1513-1570) on the importance of elocutio, he could turn easily to the polar views of Lorenzo Valla (1405-1457) or Angelo Ambrogini (Politiano) (1454-1494).[6] If interested in a specialized approach to an isolated canon other than elocutio, that same denizen had available Giulio Camillo's (1480-1544) publication on memory under the title of *L'Idea del Theatro* (1550) or that of Lodovico Dolce (1508-1588) published twelve years later on the same subject but in dialogue form.

And the choices did not end there. Exposure to the Italian version of the rhetorical art could be had by those entering the select ranks of ambassadors, especially the patriots of Venice. At a time when Venetians enjoyed a city which could boast of superior physical accommodations, cultural experiences, and intellectual concerns, they realized the wisdom of the Great Council's edict forbidding her citizens--especially those interested in diplomatic careers--from attending any university save that of Padua. For it was at Padua that rhetoric and politics effected the concrescence imagined by Isocrates and championed by Cicero; it arrived in the form of the Venetian diplomat--the *Domine Orator*--who was shaped in large part by Giason de Nores' (1530-1590) tome, *Breve Trattato dell' Oratore* . . . . (1574).[8]

To those of a more poetic persuasion, rhetorical influences were never far away. Possibly because, as Bernard Weinberg opines, rhetoric furnished the richest enticements for imitative theory and practice, budding poets and students of poetry were directed by rhetorical principles.[9] In a very real sense, poetry was rhetorical and the number of works which sought to conjoin these sister disciplines is enough to inundate the most diligent scholar. Pointedly relevant in this regard were the explorations of Sperone Speroni (1500-1588), *Dialogo della rhetorica* (1542) and the discussions of audience analysis found in Lodovico Castelvetro's (1505-1571) *Poetica* . . . .[10]

Of the treasury available to those seeking more conventional interpretations of rhetoric, it is enough to cite the donation of one whose uncommonness in this world of unusual figures is sustained by his thought as well as his action. Bartolomeo Cavalcanti (1503-1562), ambassador for the Florentine Commune, rebel orator against the tyranny of the Medici, administrator and political negotiator for the Commune of Siena, friend and confidant to most of the intellectuals of the moment, found time to complete a prodigious work called *La Retorica* (1559).[11] Its marked popularity notwithstanding (ten editions in twenty-six years), the contemporary reader soon came to realize that he was leafing through the consummate representative of rhetorical doctrine.[12] Not so the work of another contemporary, Francesco Patrizi (1529-1597). His famous polemic stance contra Aristotle pretty well restricts his readers to a notion of rhetoric colored by Platonic speculations. Moreover, each of the ten dialogues constituting Patrizi's *Della Retorica: dieci dialoghi* (1562) is an organized scenario for the capitulation of Plato's opponents.[13]

But to this fleeting glimpse of selected theoretical constructs available to the student of Italian Renaissance rhetoric, there must be added a few equally scamperous glances at the more active, insistent and energetic facet of the rhetorical experience: *practice*.

In a period known as much for its religious confrontations and political conflicts as for its intellectual and artistic achievements, it would come as no surprise to any researcher to find that the rhetorical tradition was well cared for by the practitioners of the art. On the streets, in the schools, the churches, the legislative assemblies, the courts, and the public halls interested members of the various communes had ample opportunity to witness an almost deafening array of oratorical endeavors.[14] In many, these audients found an embarrassing preponderance of authority over argument; in some, they noted signs of contemporary infatuation with verbal embellishment; in others, there were seen and heard images advanced with the force of those at home with themselves and at ease with their material, their missions, and their audiences. In these, there was the unmistakable fragrance of a rhetorical legacy whose very presence argued eloquently for the existence of a people capable of personal pride and social responsibility. Whatever his ultimate purpose, the orator of the Renaissance was helping to underscore the importance of rhetoric in the social matrix. With every application and evaluation, the rhetor was--however indirectly--increasing understanding and deepening the appreciation of this most humane of life's activities. From the steps of grand cathedrals such as St. Peter as from the natural outdoor pulpits of Assisi, Renaissance man was exhorted, chastised, praised, and condemned by thousands of religious orators. Most were but shadows of the more renowned Giovanni Dominici

(1357-1419), Bernardo da Siena (1380-1444), or Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498);[15] still to the citizens of the period they were rhetoric-in-action. And this was also the role played by civilian orators such as Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-1492), Claudio Tolomei (1492-1556), Bartolomeo Cavalcanti (1503-1562), Benedetto Varchi (1503-1565) and others less prominent.[16] A similar catalogue may be rendered for those speakers more at home in legal or diplomatic surroundings. In any event, even the most cautious conclusion would recognize a *corpus* of Renaissance rhetorical tradition kept alive and well by regular infusions of original theory, revised interpretations,and powerful applications. That same conclusion would also note the numerous scars left by the many minor battles and major wars fought to establish its nature and stake out its parameters.

II

With all that, it remains a tale half told. The long and lustrous story of rhetoric, responding to an environment rich in thought and strong with concern for the humane development of individuals, began to appear in images of pigment, cloth, metal, wood, glass, and stone as well as in the more traditional ink and sound. Despite its prejudice for verbal forms, the Renaissance mind seriously pursued a study of visual imagery since it came to believe that "a truth condensed into a visual image was somehow nearer the realm of absolute truth than one explained in words."[17] In the frenzied search for a perfect intellectual *methodos*, curious minds became enamored of iconographic pursuits. They sought to improve upon the unfolding vision of truth provided by human discourse; they desired an experience which allowed a higher degree of participation by the observer/auditor/reader.[18] What was needed, they argued, was a greater stimulation of man's visual sense toward the end of improved learning, stronger memory and progressive growth in both private and social worlds.

The philosophical position undergirding this argument included a belief in the existence of "a correlation between the two concepts of natural order and of symbolic analogies or... correspondences."[19] It focused upon the thought that the magnitude of difference between a seed and its flower reflects that which exists between the verbal symbol and its meaning. On the other hand, the distance between visual images and the meanings enticed by them was appreciably less than that. While meanings are rarely a consequent of what a thing is, the structure and form of that thing do seem to be related to the duration and energy which attend most meanings derived from it. Thus, the image of Mount Etna suggested to the individual in Germany hearing the noise associated with those words was profoundly different from the one encouraged in those who observed Mount Etna from the Sicilian villages nestling in its shadow. And the difference was as much in the energy level created as in the forms experienced. Just so, human things tend to have more force of attraction and generation of meaning than non-human ones.

To the neo-classical thinkers living and teaching on the Italian promontory, the human form was the most powerful of visual images. In addition to restoring force to the religious idea of the human as archetypal metaphor: *Imago Dei*, this concept boosted the significance of proportional norms in all art by locating Beauty, not in the parts, but in the ratio between and among them. The core of this argument as voiced by *the* Neo-Platonist, Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) and quoted by Gombrich notes that "shapes and proportions ... have the most intimate connection with the Ideas of the World Soul or the Divine Intellect."[20] Seen in this way, this prism of Form——the human figure——acted to reflect the qualities universally associated with the humane existence. Brought to the mind's eye were visions of completeness, harmony, vital balance of thought, imagination, passion and ordered action.[21] To cap it all, was the vision of a perfect marriage between *la vita activa* and *la vita contemplativa.*

Moreover, the heroic human form was thought to spur the observer in his journey toward a divine, total view.[22] By allowing the quest for these invisible universals to course through the multi-levels of multi-dimensional images enticed by the corporeal similitude of the visible form, the endeavor was made more pleasant and, potentially, more rewarding.[23] Riding on the strength of isomorphism (that powerful force moving humans toward entities similar in form, structure and spirit), and tempted by the milk of imagination, energized meanings were lured from the dark abyss of past social consciousness. Thus, *perception* of substance (structure, form) was replaced with *comprehension* of related qualities and actions; individuals were made active participants rather than passive audients. Giulio Camillo opens his unique discussion of Memory in *L'Idea del Theatro* by recalling the historical precedent set by religious figures of the past who depended upon enigmatic communication to insure the commitment of others. He felt it foolhardy to believe that humans can ascend to the expression of things divine save on the movement of similitudes between the visible and invisible.[24]

If all this be true of the heroic human form, it appears that the Italian mind found it even more evident in the heroic female form. It dominated their iconographic activity, especially in sculpted media and most especially in attempts to re-present the Seven Liberal Arts.[25] The history of such a personification is a long one, covering many cultures and kindled by many minds. Commonly thought to begin with the Platonic conception of the tripartite soul and the four virtues, the constituents of this celebrated group of seven lived through modifications of Varro (ca. 1 B.C.), Martianus Capella (ca. 410), Cassiodorus (485-575),[26] Boethius (480-524) and Thierry of Chartres (1100-1150) among others, to arrive at the Twelfth Century quite well delineated?[27] But along with a sharpened image of femaleness now permanently associated with most of the arts, the marble conceits which began to appear in France and Italy, particularly, had the Seven as constant companions of theological truths. As rendered on the facade of the Cathedral of Chartres, where they surround the figure of Jesus seated in the lap of the Madonna, they clarify the idea——says one scholar——that "man's striving for knowledge is dependent on, and directed towards, Divine Wisdom."[28] With but a moment's reflection, one soon realizes that even in this analysis, Divine Wisdom is given the support of a female form.

While the legacy of their human representations may well begin with early ideas from Plato, the custom of femaleness must go back to the birth of the Grecian Muses. As it may be recalled, the union of Zeus and Mnemosyne (the Goddess of Memory) produced nine female offspring, each of whom was to preside over various arts and sciences furnishing inspiration and divine wisdom.[29] In the various speculations on the iconographic essence of the Seven Liberal Arts, there is a strange silence on any rationale for the choice of female figures. One comes away from a reading of many of these studies with the feeling that philosophical speculation, if it exists at all, is to stand in the shadow of historical citation. To say that the female form has always been used hardly answers the question, particularly when the question is directed toward the actions of Renaissance artists and their patrons. The neo-classical atmosphere invited purposeful modification of ancient themes, dogma and models. Why, then, did these creative and fiercely independent thinkers *choose* to continue the conventional plastic image by which the Seven Arts were advanced? More to the point, why did the Italian sculptural representations of these Arts proliferate?

Wherever he journeyed, the citizen of the *Rinascimento* could experience portals which offered sermons, altar pieces which gave lessons, tombs and facades which exhorted, and all which gave pleasure. And more often than not, wherever he looked in the loggias, oratories, or public buildings his gaze was attracted to the marble, terracotta, or bronze facsimiles of Rhetoric. An interim report of my own investigation would highlight the exceptional renditions of Lady Rhetoric as found on the candelabrum located in the Cathedral of Milano; as part of the Pulpits in the Cathedrals of Pisa and Siena; on the outside wall of the Campanile in Florence; at the Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini; on the Baptismal Font in the Piazza del Municipio of Perugia; on the monument of Robert of Anjou at the Church of Santa Chiara in Naples, and on the Tomb of Sixtus IV located in the Grotto of St. Peter's in Rome.[30] Other "probables" are thought to exist in Alessandria, Positano, Orvieto, Acqui Terme, and Avigliano just to mention a few; but these are in need of close scrutiny and extended investigation before they can be verified. Still, verification of the existence of more stony analogues would add only to the improvement of a catalogue already available. While this is always a benefit, it adds little to our understanding of the panorama; it does not extend or improve what little systematic analysis has been recorded. Currently, I am endeavoring to uncover extended investigations expressly directed toward sculpted conceits of the Lady Rhetoric produced during the Italian Renaissance. With this in mind, I should like to share some unleavened ideas which may have relevance.

It would seem commonplace that any analytic format designed to aid the iconographic study of such versions of Lady Rhetoric needs to include a guide for recording the nature and degree of continuity or change.[31] Minimal points of comparison might note deviations from representative models available during the Middle Ages;[32] between efforts of Northern and Southern artists; between presentations found in religious settings and those offered in profane environments; between those presented as public legacies and those constructed for private consumption; and from the criteria crystallized by Cesare Ripa (ca. 1560- ca. 1620/5), Renaissance student of iconology who furnished the touchstone for such study. In his classic work, *Iconologia* (1593), this inquisitive son of Perugia made available an encyclopedic account of visual images used in the western world. For Rhetoric, he records:

> A beautiful lady, richly dressed, with noble head dress, openly joyful and pleasing; in her

right hand she holds a scepter and in her left, a book; on the hem of her dress she carries these words *Ornatus persuasio;* her face bears a ruddy complexion.

There is no man so crude and ill bred [as to be] insensitive to the sweetness of artistic reasoning in the mouth of an eloquent person who moves to persuade about a certain thing; [she] is painted [as] beautiful, noble and pleasing.[33]

Currently, I am extending this format to include a specific analysis of the images themselves. This scrutiny focuses on the size, shape and demeanor of the form. A rudimentary list of points to be noted would admit the head (size, shape, proportion, position) and the nature of the hair covering it (placement, type, style). The face should also be seen in terms of the harmony of features, the nature of the fleshy covering (tightness of youth vs. the sag of old age) and its general shape. Furthermore, befitting the spirit of the age, special attention needs to be directed to the eyes (opened/closed? well enclosed eyeballs? nature of eyelids and brows? evident focus?). The body must gather its share of attention, at least as regards its posture, gesture, suggested movements and vestiments. Finally, any examination which does not attend to accoutrements and setting would be partial at best.

One important purpose of the exploration, as suggested at the outset of this discussion, is the identification of the *raison d'etre* which might have motivated Renaissance notables to portray Rhetoric as Lady in many of the silent dialogues captured in stone. At the expense of inviting criticism for daring to posit tentative conclusions drawn from embryonic thoughts, I suggest that further investigation will reveal more inspired purpose than imitative habit. A hint of this is provided by R. J. Clement's observation of Michelangelo's environment as "an age and milieu where woman held the center of the literary and artistic stage."[34] Not for nothing, does this paragon of thoughtful artistry place a female within the *embrace* of a God who is preparing to share life's energy with a male. In the center panel of his Sistine Chapel masterpiece, Michelangelo fixes the amalgamation of the divine and the humane. He records the transformation of the Grecian legacy of the sacrosanct female by uniting it with the Christian inclination toward devotion. To all this was added the Biblical convention of associating femaleness with the inquisitive, probing mind needed for crucial acts of persuasion——as in the Garden of Eden——and an intellectual nebula became an iconographic design.

While specific articulation of the view has yet to be uncovered, I strongly suspect the existence of a master similitude which mixed internal visions and external constructs in the crucible of the Renaissance mind. The similitude would highlight the nuances that, as Lady, Rhetoric would:

1. receive thought, feeling and order to which something of herself would be added;
2. gestate, produce, nurture and clothe something designed especially for a social existence but reflecting both private and public elements;[35]
3. provide inspiration toward the good, the beautiful and the human;
4. allow, by the very delicacy of human judgment, the possibility of serving only to enhance personal pleasure or to promote social progress;
5. encourage responsible, responsive and flexible action;
6. act as the core and life blood of society.

There, then, is a shadowy, protean account of a rhetorical tradition more than mildly familiar to the Italian mind of the Renaissance. A story told as much by verbal signs as by marble images; a legacy which has survived the vehement opposition of powerful enemies and the dire predictions of critics who had trouble distinguishing spasms of growth from throes of death. It is a heritage which resonates the unvoiced *laudatio:*

O, che bella Donna
Questa Donna . . .
Da Ieri . . . .Di Oggi . . . .Per Domani
Questa Donna che si chiama . . . .RETORICA.

---

[1] For a semblance of this spirit, see C. Trinkhaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism: The Inaugural Orations of Bartolommeo della Fonte," *Studies in the Renaissance*, VII (1960), 96-7.

[2] Reference is made to those histories which are written in English, especially for modern students of Rhetoric. Note James Golden, *et. al.*, *The Rhetoric of Western Thought* (Dubuque, 1976); the survey in E.P.J. Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, 2nd Edition (New York, 1971), pp. 594-630; Lester Thonssen, *et. al.*, *Speech Criticism*, 2nd Edition (New York, 1970), C.S. Baldwin, *Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice* (New York, 1939) does offer a cursory discussion of several contributions by Italian scholars.

[3] Hints of this spectrum are available in G. Fontanini, *Biblioteca dell' Eloquenza Italiana*, notations by A. Zeno (Venezia, 1753), Vols. I and II; A. Galletti, *L'Eloquenza (Dalle Origini al XVI Secolo)* (Milano, 1939) and M. Cosenza, *Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary of the Italian Humanists* . . . . (Boston, 1962-67). For a sample of the translations made in this period one should see R.R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and Its Beneficiaries* (Cambridge, 1954), pp. 527-29.

[4] In the *Divina Commedia*, for example, one ought to see the speech of Ulysses *(Inferno*, Canto 26); Farinata degli Uberti's apology (*Inferno*, Canto 10) and Francesca di Rimini's explanation (*Inferno*, Canto 5). D. Vittorini *The Age of Dante* (New York, 1957), p. 104 and F. di Capua, *Insegnamenti Retorici Medievali e Dottrine Estetiche Moderne nel* 'Del Vulgari Eloquentia' *di Dante* (Napoli, 1945), pp. 84-97 ought to be noted.

[5] Dante Alighieri, *Dante's Convivio*, trans. W.W. Jackson (Oxford, 1909), pp. 105-108. "And the heaven of Venus may be compared with Rhetoric on account of two properties; one is the brilliancy of its aspect which is more pleasant to behold than that of any other star; the other is its appearing at one time in the morning, at another time in the evening. And these two properties exist in Rheotric, for Rhetoric is the pleasantest of all the Sciences, inasmuch as its chief aim is to please. It 'appears in the morning' when the rhetorician speaks directly of the surface view presented to his hearer; it 'appears in the evening,' that is behind, when the rhetorician speaks of the letter by referring to that aspect of it which is remote from the hearer . . . ."

[6] D.A. LaRusso, "Elocutio: A Story of Action and Reaction," *WS*, XXVI (Winter, 1962), 6-13; G. Vasoli, *La dialettica e la retorica dell' Umanesimo* (Milano, 1968), 28-77; F. Flora, "Angelo Politiano," *Rinascimento*, I (1954), 19-28.

[7] *L'Idea del Theatro* . . . (Fiorenza, 1550); L. Dolce, *Dialogo nel quale si ragiona del discorso di accrescere et conservar la memoria* (Venice, 1562).

[8] LaRusso, "Rhetoric and Diplomatic Training in Venice . . .." *WS*, XXIII (Winter, 1959), 69-74. An excellent background for understanding diplomacy and Venetian republicanism is G. Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London, 1955). The *Breve Trattato* . . . . (Padova, 1574) was followed by *Della Rettorica di Giason de Nores: Libri Tre* . . . . (Venezia, 1584).

[9] *Trattati di Poetica e Retorica del Cinquecento* (Bari, 1970-74), 4 Vols. See I, 546-48 and D. L. Clark, *Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance* (New York, 1963), pp. 70-4, 120-1.

[10] *Dialoghi (dieci) di M. Sperone di Speroni* (Vinegia, 1542) receives brief discussion in Fontanini, I, 101 and Galletti, p. 559. Castelvetro's work *Poetica d' Aristotele vulgarizzata* et sposta (Vienna, 1570) gets Weinberg's attention in *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago, 1961), I, 69-70 on just this point.

[11] Bartolomeo Cavalcanti, *Lettere Edite e Inedite*, C. Roaf (ed.) (Bologna, 1967), pp. xv-xxxviii.

[12] Roaf, pp. xxxix-xlvi.

[13] LaRusso, "A Neo-PlatonicDialogue:Is Rhetoric An Art? . . ., *SM* XXXII (November, 1965), 393-410.

[14] Galletti, pp. 141-538 and M. Fancelli, (ed.), *Orazioni Politiche del Cinquecento* (Bologna, 1941) should be the minimal considerations here.

[15] Galletti, 188-233; 305-410. Very good discussions of Savonarola's political style are offered in G. Arciniegas, "Savonarola, Machiavelli and Guido Antonio Vespucci: Totalitarian and Democrat Five Hundred Years Ago," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXIX (1954), 184-201 and J.H. Whitfield, "Savonarola and the Purpose of the Prince," *Modern Language Review*, ILIV (1949), 44-59.

[16] E. Santini, Firenze e i suoi 'Oratori' . . . . (Milano, 1922), Chap. VI; Galletti, 589-90; 583-4; 581-3.

[17] E. Gombrich, *"Icones Symbolicae: The Visual Image in Neo-Platonic Thought," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XI (1948), 173.

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 171-2.

[19] A. Castel, *The Crisis of the Renaissance*, trans. Peter Price (Geneva, 1968), p. 134.

[20] Gombrich, p. 177.

[21] D.G. MacRae, "The Body and Social Metaphor," in J. Benthall and T. Polhemus (eds.) *The Body as a Medium of Expression* (New York, 1975), pp. 59-73 develops a foundation for these thoughts.

[22] J.M. Steadman, *The Lamb and the Elephant* (San Marino, 1974), pp. 124-27.

[23] *Ibid*; A. Segni, *Lezioni intorno alla poesia* (1573) in Weinberg, *Trattati*, III, 37-9. Comments of Christoforo Guarda, 17th Century Professor of Rhetoric turned iconologist, are also applicable here; see the Appendix to Gombrich, *Icones*, pp. 188-92.

[24] Camillo, p. 8. An additional facet of Camillo's thought is presented in his *De Transmutatione*, made available in L. Bolzoni, "Eloquenza e alchima in un testo inedito di Guilio," Rinascimento, XIV (1974), 243-64.

[25] The work most often identified by others as the classic in this realm is the four part effort of P. d'Ancona, "Le Rappresentazioni allegoriche delle Arti Liberali nel Medioevo e nel Rinascimento," *L'Arte* (1902), 137-55; 211-28; 269-89; 370-85. Also pertinent here are: A. Katzenellbogen, "The Representation of the Seven Liberal Arts," in *Twelfth-Century Europe and the Foundations of Modern Society*, Clagett, et al., (eds.) (Madison, 1961), pp. 39-55; H. Parker, "The Seven Liberal Arts," *English Historical Review*, XIX (July, 1890), 417-61; R. van Marle, *Iconographie de L'Art Profane au Moyen-Age et a la Renaissance* (New York, 1971), principally Chapter III.

[26] Parker, *op. cit.*

[27] A. Katzenellbogen, pp. 39-45.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 39-42, quote from p. 42. P.O. Kristeller recounts the

history of these arts in "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XII (October, 1951), 504-20.

[29] For a Renaissance Italian's view of this tradition see M. Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators* (Oxford, 1971) and the same author's "Guarino, Pisanello and Manuel Chrysoloras," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXVII (1965), 183-204. It seems that the Muse Calliope furnished the model analogy between heavenly organization and discursive order.

[30] Katzenellbogen, *op. cit.* A splendid analysis is presented by L.D. Ettlinger, "Pollaiuolo's Tomb of Pope Sixtus IV," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XVI (1953), 239-74.

[31] For its role as scholarly model, at least, one might appreciate R. Freyhan, "The Evolution of the Caritas Figure in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XI (1948), 68-86; also in the same journal, E. Wind, "Charity," I (1938), 322-30 and R. Wittkower," 'Grammatica ....," II (1938), 82-84.

[32] An idea of this is contained in Ettlinger, pp. 251-53.

[33] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia, overo descrittion d' Imagini delle Virtù, Vitij, Affetti, Passioni humane, Corpi celesti, mondo e sue parti.* (Padova, 1611), p. 460. The Italian is as follows:

> Donna bella, vestita riccamente, con nobile acconciatura di testa, mostrandosi allegra, and piacevole, nella mano destra terrà uno Scettro, and nella sinistra un Libro, portando nel lembo della veste scritte queste parole, *Ornatus persuasio:* and il color del viso sarà rubicondo.
>
> Non è huomo sì rustico, and sì selvaggio, che non senta la dolcezza d'un' artificioso ragionamento in bocca di persona faconda, che si sforza persuadere qualche cosa, però si dipinge bella, nobile, and piacevole ....

[34] R. J. Clement, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art* (New York, 1961), p. 187.

[35] Touching on this point, albeit indirectly, is the thought of Freyhan, pp. 83-5 which marks the period when the female image of *Madonna del Latte* becomes vogue.

AN APPLICATION OF PERELMAN'S UNIVERSAL AUDIENCE TO BURKE'S SPEECH TO THE ELECTORS OF BRISTOL

Phillip Marshall
University of California, Davis

Chaim Perelman's concept of the universal audience represents a radical break with the traditional concept that a rhetor always addresses a particular audience. Perelman argues that every speaker carries a construct of all rational men, embodying the concept of highest rationality. To the extent that the speaker and his audience share this construct of highest rationality, the universal audience, the speaker can argue to this audience. In contrast to Perelman, the traditional perspective holds that each situation involving the rhetor and his audience is unique, and all of the arguments a rhetor uses are determined by the nature of that particular audience. In one of the definitive essays in modern rhetorical scholarship, Herbert Wichelns concludes that rhetorical criticism "regards a speech as a communication to a specific audience," [1] saying that a speech "grows directly out of a social situation." [2] In a more recent article, Bernard Weinberg declares that the audience in a rhetorical work is "always particular persons, not a general and universal audience." [3]

Perelman's universal audience is controversial, and there is inherent ambiguity in the concepts of all rational men, what that rationality is, and the constructs of these as they exist in the minds of the rhetor and his audience. Moreover, Perelman never gives a specific example of a rhetor speaking to the universal audience.

Edmund Burke patently rejected adaptation to his particular audience in a speech to the electors of Bristol in 1780, and an examination of this speech in terms of Perelman's universal audience can serve a heuristic purpose, both in giving us a more coherent vision of Burke's speech and serving as a practical, pragmatic example of Perelman's theory. My purpose in this essay is to clarify our conception of both the speech and the theory through an application of Perelman's theory to Burke's example. I will discuss briefly the chief characteristics of Perelman's universal audience, and then examine those aspects of Burke's speech which indicate that he is speaking to a universal audience.

In *The New Rhetoric*, Perelman describes some of the characteristics we would expect to find in a speech to the universal audience.

> Argumentation addressed to a universal audience must convince the reader that the reasons adduced are of a compelling character, that they are self evident, and possess an absolute and timeless validity, independent of local or historical contingencies. [4]

Perelman's "absolute and timeless validity" is not derived from the purely logical grounds of Cartesian first principles, but from the agreement of all rational men upon the validity of the arguments used. Perelman is attempting to find a way out of the difficulties which confront a rhetor addressing only a particular audience. First, he intends to redefine the persuasion-conviction dichotomy that has long polarized rhetoric and the pure sciences. When a rhetor argues to his audience from the higher authority of all rational men, his arguments attain certainty, and we can thus "... apply the term *persuasive* to argumentation that only claims validity for a particular audience, and the term *convincing* to argumentation that presumes to gain the adherence of every rational being." [5] Further, when a speaker addresses the universal audience he is addressing a unity of persons, and avoids the danger of giving arguments "... that are foreign or even directly opposed to what is acceptable to persons other than those he is presently addressing." [6] A speaker addressing a universal audience is assured that his arguments influence his listeners in one direction. Finally, because a rhetor can argue from a higher plane, he can avoid absolute concession to the ethical standards of his audience without abandoning the use of argumentation.

Perelman does not give any examples of discourse to the universal audience, and so it is impossible to know exactly what to look for in Burke's speech. We can begin with any indications that Burke is *not* speaking to a particular audience——that he is not bound to the immediate situation, and that his arguments are intended to gain the conviction of his audience.

Throughout the speech we find indications of this. Burke was a member of Parliament canvassing his constituents for reelection and needed to defend himself against four charges which had become issues in the election. Burke consistently argues from a high,

stable position, portraying himself as a constant man. This was a strategy we would expect from a speaker who was arguing to an audience which transcended space and time. Further, the fact that he was able to use the same essential strategy to argue the rightness of his actions to four separate charges indicated that the power of his arguments did indeed come from some higher authority than his immediate audience.

Burke stated, "I will never attempt to raise myself by depreciating the merits of my competitors."[7] His opening remarks let the audience know what strategies he would *not* use to exonerate himself. Strengthened by his use of the absolute "never," he implied that he would argue from a higher plane; two paragraphs further on, he became more explicit.

> . . . to hold out to a conduct, which stands in that clear and steady light for all its good and evil, to hold out to that conduct the paltry winking tapers of excuses and promises, I never will do it. They may obscure it with their smoke, but they never can illumine sunshine by such a flame as theirs. (p. 5)

Burke's "clear and steady light" is easily equated with the qualities of highest rationality Perelman gives his universal audience. The light Burke wishes to be judged by, and will argue from is an authority which transcends the immediate situation. Burke's "light" of reason allows him to argue for what he believes is right even though his audience may not share his views. Contrasted to Burke's position are the "paltry winking tapers of excuses and promises,"—any arguments addressed to his immediate audience. Burke has declined bondage to his particular audience in favor of a higher authority.

Before concluding his exordium, Burke articulates two of the hazards of arguing to a particular audience. Although he might wish to "make every part of my conduct agreeable to every one of my constituents," he observes that "in a city so greatly divided as this, it is weak to expect it. In such a discordance of sentiments, it is better to look to the nature of things than to the humors of men." He intends to address them on a level of stable fact, where his arguments will affect all the factions in his audience equally. He goes on to tell his audience about the flaws of too much concession to their views: "The very attempt toward pleasing everybody discovers a temper always flashy and frequently insincere" (p. 6).

Having given a general justification for his actions, and having told his audience that he intends to justify them on the basis of higher authority, Burke proceeds to answer each of the four accusations.

The first charge he answers is that he did not visit Bristol frequently enough during his tenure in office. Burke remarks, it is the only charge concerned with his personal conduct rather than some matter of state. The nature of this charge would seem to make it the most difficult of the four to argue from the higher ground of a universal audience. Burke runs through several arguments, all of them effective refutations of the charge, but his final argument, clearly the capstone of his defense, is the one which seems most connected to universality.

Burke told his audience that here had been times he could have visited them, but would not because of their frenzied enthusiasm for the American war. Knowing that defeat and humiliation were inevitable, he saw in every early glory a later disgrace:

> I could not bear to show you a representative whose face did not reflect that of his constituents; a face that could not joy in your joys, and sorrow in your sorrows. (p. 15)

The reasoning of this argument is clear and demonstrates Burke's constant nature over the fickle one of his audience. Burke would not adjust his sentiments to those of his constituents when his own views differed from theirs. He is beginning to rise above the immediate situation, and he adds: ". . . remember once more, I do not mean to extenuate or excuse" (p. 17).

As an argument to the universal audience this is not complete yet. Although we know where he declines to find justification for his actions, his appeal *to* a higher rationality is not explicit, and his actions and motives are not clearly laid before all rational men. This problem is resolved as Burke argues the second charge against him.

The second charge concerned Burke's actions on the trade bills for the Irish. The stopping of trade while the American war was in progress hurt Ireland sorely, and two bills to relax the monopoly England held on Irish trade were put forth in Parliament. Although Burke supported these against the wishes of his constituents, they were defeated, and eventual open rebellion in Ireland forced Parliament to enact laws allowing free trade. Flushed by their success, the Irish Parliament declared that the Irish military would henceforth be governed by Ireland and not England.

Burke strongly opposed this action of the Irish Parliament, but because he was Irish and had favored the free trade bills, the charge of favoritism to his homeland had been raised against him.

While a reading of the speech without the universal audience in mind shows a clear break between Burke's treatment of the first and second charges, when re-read as a speech to the universal audience a deeper unity becomes apparent. We see that the first and second charges are parts of one unified appeal to the universal audience. Bringing all of the events of that time in Ireland, America, and England together under his view, Burke surveys them from the firm ground of higher principles. Presenting these events as intimately related, his actions were a rational response to an all encompassing view of the "nature of things." Stating that a "new world of policy was opened, to which it was necessary we should conform, whether we would or not," (p. 19) he posits an inevitability to events and urges his audience to view events and his actions from some broader perspective than simply as merchants of Bristol. He continues to argue that the narrow view is the impotent view, that "... the silly little canvass prattling of obeying instructions, and having no view but yours, and such idle senseless tales which amuse the vacant ears of unthinking men," would not have saved them from "... the pelting of the pitiless storm ...." (p. 21) He refuses to give them "idle, senseless tales" designed to appease "unthinking men." Instead, he speaks to them as rational men, as part of his construct of *all rational men.* Closing this defense with a passionate reiteration of his stand, we can see that he has no intention of speaking to a specific audience or time.

> I did not obey your instructions! No, I conformed to the instructions of truth and nature, and maintained your interests against your opinions with a constancy that became me .... (p. 24)

The "interests" of Burke's audience here possess the enduring qualities we expect of the interest of all rational men, and he says that, "I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but such opinions as you and I *must* have five years hence" (p. 24). Burke's arguments in answering this charge reach over the heads of his immediate audience, and beyond their time-frame, forming an argument to the universal audience.

Because an integral part of this argument was his involvement in the American affair, and because his actions in the American affair were the core of his argument against the first charge, his defense against this second accusation constitutes a continuation of his defense to the first. Taken together, his answers to these first two charges comprise one single argument to the universal audience, and the charges he answers become, in this sense, variations in a single argument for higher principles. As Burke moves through the remainder of the speech, this becomes more and more apparent.

The third charge concerns Burke's actions toward Lord Beauchamp's debtor's reform bill, designed to allow an imprisoned debtor who met certain conditions to appear before a court. The court could decide to release the individual from imprisonment, but his future earnings would be liable toward his debts. This was an attempt to correct the then current conditions under which, an individual could be imprisoned at the discretion of his creditors if he could not pay his debts. The bill did not pass, although Burke was in favor of it.

His defense here is against the injustice of the previous laws and an argument for the equity of Lord Beauchamp's law. Once more, he puts the specific issue into the larger context of a struggle for justice. "I suspect that here too, if we contrive to oppose this bill, we shall be found in a struggle against the nature of things...." (p. 28). Justice and injustice are Burke's concerns here: justice, as that which all men deserve, and Lord Beauchamp's law would promote; and injustice, as the bitter fruit of the old laws. He continues on this issue, as in the two before, to argue from the highest ethical levels, and declines to sink to the pragmatic level of his specific audience, stating that "... credit has little or no concern in this cruelty" (p. 30). The consistency of Burke's arguments up to this point allow him to bring the speech to a united conclusion in his answering of the final allegation.

Burke's positive actions regarding the repeal of a law against the Roman Catholics was the final issue he needed to deal with in this speech. The repeal of this law started the "No Popery" riots in London, in which Protestants rioted and civil order broke down completely for a few days.

In answering this charge, Burke's strategy remains consistent with his approach to the first three. But he goes further and says, "It is a business closely connected with all the rest. They are all on one and the same principle" (p. 31). By uniting all of the charges against him under one set of sacred principles, his defense against the fourth charge simultaneously serves as a defense to the first three

charges, and the way is clear for him to bring his speech to an eloquent close.

Burke moves away from the specific issue of religious freedom, to the broader issues of "universal justice." He argues that men oppress each other, not because of some specific cause, but because their "whole scheme of freedom is made up of pride, perverseness, and insolence" (p. 65). Because all of Burke's actions are guided by the light of reason, he cannot answer any of the charges without answering them all. Telling his audience that, "I am perfectly indifferent concerning the pretexts upon which we torment one another," (p. 67) he brings all of the issues together in an eloquent culmination to his arguments:

> You could give us none to wrong or oppress, or even to suffer any kind of oppression or wrong, or any grounds whatsoever; not on political, as in the affairs of America; not on commercial, as in those of Ireland; not in civil, as in the laws for debt; not in religious, as in the statutes against Catholic or Protestant dissenters. The diversified but connected fabric of universal justice is well cramped and bolted together in all its parts .... (p. 67)

It is evident that this speech is not a defense against four separate charges to a particular audience in space and time, but a discourse to a universal audience of rational beings on the universal issues of equity, freedom, and the rights of man.

Perelman says, "for each speaker at each moment, there exists an audience transcending all others, which cannot easily be forced within the bounds of a particular audience."[8] This is certainly the audience to which Burke addresses his arguments. The "clear and steady light" of reason, and the "universal justice" which guide Burke are addressed to all reasoning men, in all times and places. Time and space are irrelevant to his arguments, and indeed, his words still hold sway over the minds and emotions of men two-hundred years later.

Some problems arise with this interpretation of the speech. Although it clearly meets all the criteria Perelman gives for a speech to the universal audience, notably transcending the specific situation and seeking the conviction of the audience, Burke lost the election, and in this very pragmatic sense we can count the speech a failure.

Why, in a speech whose arguments presumed to gain the adherence of every rational being did Burke not gain that adherence? Perelman himself gives us one possible answer:

> If argumentation addressed to the universal audience and calculated to convince does not convince everybody, one can always resort to *disqualifying the recalcitrant* by classifying him as stupid or abnormal.[9]

As Perelman goes on to say, the difficulty with this solution is the danger of having to disqualify an entire audience, fostering the development of what he calls the "elite audience."

If the electors of Bristol are not too ignorant to belong to the universal audience, and that seems an unprofitable as well as unlikely hypothesis, why did Burke's arguments fail to convince them? The flaw may lie in the way Perelman defines his conviction-persuasion dichotomy.

Following Perelmen's thinking, a speaker's arguments have the power to convince an audience to the extent that the construct which the speaker and the audience carry in their minds of the universal audience coincide. However, the speaker must connect the specific situation with the universal audience. To the extent that a speaker must address a specific issue, he must address a correspondingly specific audience, and the task of the speaker is to show how the specific audience's situation conforms to the rationalism of the universal audience. If this is so, then the rhetor is placed in the position of constructing arguments for his specific audience *and* the universal audience. He must prove the immutable rightness of his actions and persuade his immediate audience that their situation is subject to these principles. Here is where the ability of a speaker to gain the conviction of his audience is weakest. Only to the extent that a rhetor can *persuade* his audience that their situation relates to the universal audience can he *convince* them.

It is possible to address arguments solely to the universal audience, but in such argument no connection will be made between the universal of philosophers, and the particular, which is the realm of rhetors who are unavoidably enmeshed in the events of the world around them. Although Perelman avoids the problem, there is a conflict in his theory here, since a rhetor involved in the world of action must always address a specific audience. Perelman says of his universal audience that "philosophers always claim to be addressing such an audience." The other side of this coin seems to be that an individual addressing the universal audience *only* is not a rhetor,

but a philosopher, because his arguments will necessarily be limited to the high abstract plane of universal issues and relationships among all rational men.

The conclusion I reach is that a rhetor must always argue to his specific audience to some greater or lesser degree, and thus he must construct arguments which appeal to that audience. This does not mean that the rhetor is in complete bondage to his audience. As Perelman says:

> . . . it must not be overlooked that the orator is nearly always at liberty to give up persuading an audience when he cannot persuade it effectively except by the use of methods that are repugnant to him. It should not be thought, where argument is concerned, that it is always honorable to succeed in persuasion, or even to have such an intention. [11]

Perhaps this is the course Burke chose. Rather than argue completely to his specific audience, he presented arguments justifying his actions to the universal audience. If Burke's audience declined to rise to the level of all rational men, we should not assume that his arguments to the universal audience *or* specific audience were poor. Rather, what we may have here is an example of a man of unwavering integrity who realized that success in persuasion is not always the greatest measure of a man or his arguments.

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[1] Herbert Wichelns, "Literary Criticism of Oratory," in R. Scott and B. Brock (eds.), *Methods of Literary Criticism: A Twentieth Century Perspective*, New York: Harper and Row, 1972, p. 54.

[2] Wichelns, p. 58.

[3] Bernard Weinberg, "Formal Analysis in Poetry and Rhetoric," *Papers in Rhetoric and Philosophy*, Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1965, p. 118.

[4] Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise On Argumentation*, trans. J. Wilkinson and P. Weaver, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969.

[5] Perelman, p. 28.

[6] Perelman, p. 31.

[7] From the text of Burke's speech in Chauncey A. Goodrich, *Select British Eloquence*, Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs Merrill, 1963. Further quotations from this text will be noted by parentheses at the end of the quotation giving the paragraph number from which the quotation came.

[8] Perelman, p. 30.

[9] Perelman, p. 33.

[10] Perelman, p. 31.

[11] Perelman, p. 25.